

45. STALACTITES, AND STALAGMITES.—By the infiltration of water through limestone rocks, into fissures and cavities, sparry concretions are produced on the roofs, sides, and floors of caverns. The concretionary masses which are dependent from the roof like icicles, are called *stalactites*; those which form on the floor, from the droppings of the water, are termed *stalagmites*; and when, as frequently happens, the two unite, a singularly picturesque effect is produced,—the caves appearing as if supported by pillars of the most extraordinary beauty and variety.* Sometimes a linear fissure in the roof, by the direction it gives to the dropping of the lapidifying water, forms a transparent curtain or partition. A remarkable instance of this kind occurs in a cavern in North America, called Weyer's Cave, which is situated in the limestone range of the Blue Mountains.† There are also many caverns in England, celebrated for the variety and beauty of their sparry ornaments: those in Derbyshire are well known.

46. GROTTO OF ANTIPAROS.—The Grotto of Antiparos in the Grecian Archipelago, not far from Paros, is justly admired. The sides and roof of its principal cavity are covered with immense incrustations of calcareous matter, which form either stalactites, depending from above, or irregular pillars rising from the floor. Several perfect columns reaching to the ceiling have been formed, and others

* Appendix C.

† Appendix D.